

## Message Text

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PAGE 01     DACCA 01884 120157Z  
ACTION NEA-07

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FM AMEMBASSY DACCA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4196  
INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 1884

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: OCON SENV PFOR GB IN  
SUBJECT: FOREIGN SECRETARY'S COMMENTS ON TALKS WITH NEW GOI LEADERS

REF: DACCA 1731

1. FOREIGN SECRETARY TABARAK HUSAIN ASKED ME TO SEE HIM SATURDAY, APRIL 9, PRIMARILY TO UNDERSCORE THE BDG'S REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL PL-480 TITLE I FOODGRAINS. HE ALSO USED THE OCCASION TO FILL ME IN BRIEFLY ON TALKS WHICH HE AND PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER SHAMSUL HAQ HAD IN NEW DELHI WITH THE INDIAN LEADERS BEFORE OPENING OF THE NONALIGNED BUREAU MEETING.

2. TABARAK SAID THE BDG DELEGATION WAS MOST PLEASED BY THE RECEPTION THEY RECEIVED IN NEW DELHI AND BY THE FRIENDLY ATTITUDE SHOWN BY THE DESAI GOVERNMENT. THEY WERE PLEASED THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER MET THEM AT THE AIRPORT AND PARTICULARLY BY THE FACT THAT MORARJI DESAI RECEIVED SHAMSUL HAQ SO SOON AFTER HIS ARRIVAL IN NEW DELHI. TABARAK WAS A BIT MIFFED THAT HE WAS NOT INCLUDED ON THIS CALL BUT TOOK IT IN GOOD GRACE. HE SAID THAT DURING THE MEETING MORARJI DESAI STRESSED  
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HIS GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE FOR GOOD RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS ON A BASIS OF RECIPROCITY AND ALSO FOR TOP LEVEL CONTACTS AMONG THE VARIOUS GOVERNMENTAL LEADERS. HE SAID HE COULD NOT HIMSELF VISIT BANGLADESH AT THIS TIME (THE BANGLADESHI READ THIS TO MEAN HE WOULD LIKE TO AT SOME POINT), BUT THE INDIAN DELEGATION VISITING DACCA ON APRIL 15 HAD HIS FULL SUPPORT. TABARAK SAID THE

BDG IS ENCOURAGED BY THE ATTITUDE OF THE NEW GOI. THIS, HE SAID, IS A "MORAL GOVERNMENT" IN CONTRAST TO ITS PREDECESSOR, AND THE BDG WILL RESPOND TO THE FRIENDLY OVERTURES OF THE NEW PRIME MINISTER AND GIVE HIM THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT.

3. REGARDING FARRAKA, TABARAK SAID BANGLADESH HOPED JAGJIVAN RAM WOULD ADVANCE NEW PROPOSALS DURING THE APRIL 15 DISCUSSIONS. THEY WERE NOT, HOWEVER, CLEAR WHETHER THIS WOULD BE THE CASE. THEIR TALKS IN NEW DELHI HAD SHOWN AT LEAST THREE RESTRAINTS ON THE MANEUVERABILITY OF THE MORARJI DESAI GOVERNMENT. FIRST, STATE ELECTIONS ARE PENDING, AND THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN WEST BENGAL IS PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE. SECONDLY, THE PROCESS OF PARTY CONSOLIDATION IS NOT YET COMPLETED. THEY WERE TOLD IN NEW DELHI THAT THE FOUR PARTIES COMPRISING JANATA WOULD FORMALLY MERGE DURING MAY, BUT THAT THE CFD WOULD RETAIN ITS SEPARATE IDENTITY. INDIANS WITH WHOM THEY TALKED IN NEW DELHI PUT THE BEST POSSIBLE FACE ON THIS BY SAYING THAT CFD, AS A SEPARATE PARTY, WOULD BE ABLE TO ATTRACT SUPPORTERS FROM CONGRESS. AS A THIRD RESTRAINT, TABARAK SAID THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF INDIA IS A SUPPORTER OF THE CONGRESS PARTY. THIS, AS LONG AS IT CONTINUES, COULD FURTHER INHIBIT THE FREEDOM OF ACTION BY THE NEW CABINET.

4. I TOLD TABARAK THAT THERE WAS JUST NOT ENOUGH WATER TO MEET THE FULL NEEDS OF BOTH BANGLADESH AND INDIA. CONFIDENTIAL

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AS A RESULT, BOTH SIDES WOULD HAVE TO MAKE CONCESSIONS. TABARAK AGREED, AND SAID IN CONFIDENCE THAT THE BDG WAS WILLING TO MAKE FURTHER COMPROMISES ON THE FARRAKA PROBLEM, BUT THAT BANGLADESH ALSO HAD DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEMS WITHIN THE GOI MUST UNDERSTAND.

5. TABARAK SAID JAGJIVAN RAM TOLD THE GOI DELEGATION IN NEW DELHI THAT HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS "ALL OUTSTANDING PROBLEMS" DURING HIS APRIL 15 VISIT. BANGLADESH INTERPRETS THIS TO MEAN THAT HE WILL BE PREPARED TO TALK ABOUT THE BORDER SITUATION. TABARAK SAID HE FOUND THE NEW GOI HAD A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF THIS SITUATION. ONE CABINET MEMBER (UNIDENTIFIED) ADMITTED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE INDIAN FOREIGN SECRETARY THAT THE GOI WAS DIRECTLY INVOLVED WITH BANGLADESH DISSIDENT GROUPS OPERATING FROM INDIAN TERRITORY AND SAID THAT THIS SUPPORT WOULD STOP.

6. COMMENT: THE GOI SEEMS TO HAVE HANDLED THE BANGLADESH

DELEGATION WELL, AND RELATIONS WITH THE NEW INDIAN  
GOVERNMENT ARE OFF TO A GOOD START. THE FACT THAT  
JAGJIVAN RAM, WHOM THE BANGLADESHIS KNOW AND TRUST,  
IS HEADING THE GOI DELEGATION TO DACCA IS ALSO A HOPEFUL  
SIGN. THERE ARE, IN SHORT, INDICATIONS ON BOTH SIDES  
OF THE BORDER THAT THESE TWO COUNTRIES ARE COMING  
TO REALIZE THAT BOTH WILL LOSE IF BAD RELATIONS PERSIST.  
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